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Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

Provisional

7120th meeting
Wednesday, 26 February 2014, 10.25 a.m.
New York

President:	Ms. Murmokaitė	(Lithuania)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Oyarzábal
	Australia	Mr. Quinlan
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	Chile	Mr. Errázuriz
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Sul Kyung-hoon
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Shearman
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

Security Council mission

Briefing of the Security Council mission to Mali (31 January to 3 February 2014)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council mission

Briefing of the Security Council mission to Mali (31 January to 3 February 2014)

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by the co-leads of the Security Council mission to Mali, the Permanent Representative of France, Mr. Gérard Araud, and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Chad, Mr. Bante Mangaral.

I now give the floor to Mr. Araud.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): From 1 to 3 February, I had the privilege, together with my Chadian colleague Mr. Bante Mangaral, to lead the Security Council mission to Mali.

During the visit, the Council met with the Malian authorities returned by the elections held in 2013. We had discussions with President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, Prime Minister Tatam Ly and several members of the Government. We also met with the armed groups that are signatories to the Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement, as well as those that have adhered to the Agreement.

On 2 February, we travelled to Mopti, where we met with local authorities and civil society representatives from Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu. On that occasion, we visited the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) camp at Mopti and evaluated the level of deployment of MINUSMA.

Among the numerous lessons we can draw from the mission, I would like to underscore two points in particular: first — with regard to political dialogue — any lasting solution for northern Mali must be found by the Malians themselves and receive the ongoing support of the international community; and, secondly — with regard to security — any lasting improvement to security in northern Mali will require a comprehensive political solution.

First, on the subject of political dialogue, there is the fact that any sustainable solution for northern Mali should be found by the Malians themselves, with ongoing support by the international community. We had an open and fruitful dialogue on that subject with the Malian authorities. The President of Mali noted that any new political agreement should be reached within Mali itself, and the members of the Security Council, for their part, said that they were working to support the work of the democratically elected Malian authorities.

The members of the Council also recalled that the armed groups should be disarmed within the framework of a negotiated political process, in accordance with the commitments under the Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement. The Prime Minister of Mali highlighted that the two processes of disarmament and dialogue were making parallel progress. He also stated that the modalities for disarmament would have to be laid out in detail in coordination with MINUSMA. The armed groups, for their part, asked that the Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement be fully and quickly implemented. They stated that they would like the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and MINUSMA to support that process. We reminded them of their obligation to put their elements under cantonment and engage in negotiations with the ultimate aim of disarmament.

We perceived a lack of trust between the two parties. We expressed our support for Algeria's efforts to bring the two parties' positions in line with each other. We welcome the fact that, before we left Mali, the Government laid out the elements for a road map out of the crisis. We welcome the adoption a few days ago by the Government and the armed groups, with the support of MINUSMA, of a method for cantonment, and we now request the parties — both the Government and the armed groups — to sincerely commit to that path without hesitation. The Security Council will continue to monitor the fulfilment of those commitments. We once again commended the Special Representative and MINUSMA for their support to that dialogue.

Secondly, in terms of security, bringing lasting security to northern Mali will necessarily require a comprehensive political solution. Operation Cerval, the French operation, and MINUSMA have noted that the terrorist groups still have the capacity to carry out operations. We recalled the urgency of MINUSMA being rapidly and fully deployed in the north, in particular

in the context of Operation Serval's drawdown. The European operation in Mali briefed us on its work in training the Malian army, including practical education on respect for human rights.

The representatives of civil society in Mali stressed that there would be no lasting peace in Mali without development. Only by offering employment opportunities will Malian youth be prevented from joining the ranks of terrorist groups or drug traffickers. The Special Representative felt that the mutual commitments undertaken by the Malian authorities and the international financial partners in terms of Mali's development should be fulfilled following the Brussels conference of 15 May 2013.

To conclude, I would like, on behalf of the Security Council, to express my sincere thanks to the authorities of Mali for the welcome they extended to the Council and for the constructive and frank exchanges that we had. I would also like to thank the Secretariat and MINUSMA, in particular Mr. Albert Koenders, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for their valuable assistance in organizing the trip.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Mangaral.

Mr. Mangaral (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I fully align myself with the briefing by Ambassador Gérard Araud on the Security Council mission to Mali. I would just like to add a few comments.

The arrival of the Security Council mission in Mali gave rise to much hope among Malians, who are weary of the stalemate in the negotiations that are the only way to return to lasting peace and a normalization of the situation. We note their enthusiasm and genuine willingness to proceed to inclusive negotiations. All parts of Malian society are unanimous on the fact that the roots of the crisis affecting their country are neither religious nor tribal, as the population is mostly Muslim and the fact that several ethnic groups live side by side in almost every part of the country has led to a number of mixed marriages and has woven solidarity and tolerance into the country's social fabric.

While the Malian authorities recognize the merits of the Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement, they believe that it is time for Mali to take ownership of the Agreement. At the same time, they are exploring new initiatives, such as the Algerian process that is currently under way.

Despite the significant progress made on normalizing situation, real challenges persist in the areas of security, politics, food, health, and the legal and educational systems. Crime persists, due to the lack of legal authority, in particular in the north of the country, despite a limited return of administrative rule in some parts of the country.

The Ouagadougou Preliminary Agreement is a bone of contention between the signatories and certain armed groups who joined the Agreement. The signatories complained that they were ignored or excluded from the process leading to the resumption of negotiations. We also see divisions within the armed groups, for example in the Arab Azawad movement, which has two different factions, each claiming legitimacy. That could complicate things when the negotiations are relaunched.

The Government has been accused of coopting parties or candidates, whose representative nature is often contested by their base. The Government is also accused of giving preference to armed groups instead of to the victims of those same armed groups.

Women, although they are in the majority and very involved in civil society organizations, are feeling the weight of sociocultural and religious pressures that make certain subjects taboo, such as sexual violence, physical abuse, forced marriage and divorce, as the perpetrators of such acts often cannot be held liable under the law.

Despite the prominent role that the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali plays alongside Malians in their search for peace and stability, it is seen as a kind of second Government.

The reconstitution of the jihadist groups in Mali's interior and along its borders is a cause for concern not just for Mali but for the entire Sahel region. As President Buyoya of Rwanda stated, Mali's priorities — to develop a security strategy and the capacity to fight against transnational terrorism — will progressively become those of the countries of the Sahel.

The road map that the Malian Government has settled on is a hopeful one and a good opportunity for the relaunching of the peace talks.

Finally, all of the international community represented in Mali expressed their willingness to support Mali in the dialogue aimed at laying the foundations for lasting peace.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I should like to express appreciation to all of the members of the Security Council and the Secretariat who participated in the mission for the manner in which they discharged their important responsibilities on behalf of the Council.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.